H E L L B L A Z E R

Issue 230

"In At The Deep End"

Part 1 of 2

by

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Third Draft

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PAGE 1

Hi Leo! Got to tell you how excited I am to be working with you on the best character in comics. This is a fairly dialogue-heavy first issue, so you'll have to leave plenty of "dead space" in the panels for balloons placement - especially in the riverside scenes between John Constantine and Webb. Obviously things will "open up" a lot more once John gets free in the next issue.

But please do let me know if you ever think I haven't left you enough space for the visuals, or if you think there's a better way of doing something, and I'll be happy to re-write it. This is a collaboration, after all!

Okay, with that said, let's start the first page with a series of full-width slot-shaped panels, slowly zooming in as we set the scene...

1) The London skyline, dead of night. The River Thames snakes through the silhouetted city, reflecting a sky lit nicotine-yellow by the sodium-vapor streetlights...

CAPTION
I USED TO BE A *PLAYER*.

CAPTION
FUNNY HOW QUICK IT CAN ALL GO UP THE SWANEE, ENNIT?

CAPTION
I MEAN, MY NAME USED TO STAND FOR SOMETHING AROUND HERE. PEOPLE *RESPECTED* ME...

CAPTION
... OR AT LEAST THEY WERE WARY ENOUGH TO FAKE IT.

2) Zoom in closer. We're somewhere down near Wapping - old Victorian warehouses converted into riverside yuppie apartments.

CAPTION
NOWADAYS? I'M JUST THE BLOKE WHO CLEANS UP OTHER PEOPLE'S MESS...

CAPTION
I'M THE FUCKING *PLUMBER*.

3) Zoom in closer. The Thames is at low tide, the stumps of old dock-supports protruding from the exposed mud banks like rotted teeth. The famous old pub THE PROSPECT OF WHITBY maybe backs onto the river somewhere in the panel...

CAPTION
DUNNO WHY I EVEN BOTHER. IT'S NOT LIKE I EVER GET A WORD OF GRATITUDE.

CAPTION
YOU TRY AND DO A FAVOR FOR A MATE, AND WHERE DOES IT GET YOU... ?

4) Zoom in closer. A figure sits on a deck-chair on the muddy river bank - the kind of red-and-white striped folding chair you get at British seaside resorts. He's facing a second figure who sits waist-deep in the river, slumped back against an old wooden stanchion/pillar - what used to be a support for a long-gone jetty. We're still too far away to make out who either of them are yet...

CAPTION
WAIST DEEP IN SHIT WITH THE TIDE COMING IN, EVERY FUCKING TIME.

PAGES 2-3

DOUBLE-PAGE SPREAD! Now we're down at the shore-line to reveal the scene --

Maybe 15 feet away from us on panel left, JOHN CONSTANTINE sits up to his waist in river-water, his arms cuffed behind his back around an old, 2-foot thick wooden stanchion. Mud and algae on the stanchion shows us the eventual level of the high-water mark, several feet above John's head. He looks cold, wet and pissed off, glowering at us intensely.

In the extreme foreground on panel right, a SECOND FIGURE sits on the deck chair, facing John. This is WEBB, a cold-eyed London gangster wearing a warm sheepskin jacket - picture the actor Ray Winstone. Our POV (point-of-view) is such that we cannot see his face here - we're looking out past his waist-level, where we can see a well-worn black AUTOMATIC HANDGUN in his hand, resting on his lap or knee. The gun is not actually being aimed, but is resting in such a position as to visually suggest a threat to John. The implication of the scene is that John will drown as the tide rises, and Webb is here to ensure he doesn't escape. It's cold, their breath misting in the night air. Leave enough "dead space" below the gun to put the title and credits at the foot of the right-hand page...

CAPTION
CASE IN POINT.

JOHN
PUT IT AWAY, WEBB. YOU'RE NOT IMPRESSING ANYONE...
(link)
... UNLESS YOU WANNA JUST SHOOT ME NOW, AND SAVE US BOTH THE WHOLE BLOODY SONG AND DANCE.

TITLE AND CREDITS
(at foot of page)
IN AT THE DEEP END (PART ONE)

PAGE 4

1) A medium-close establishing shot of WEBB. He sits back in his deck chair, the gun resting in his lap, patient and relaxed. With his free hand, he puts an open pack of Silk Cut cigarettes to his mouth, pulling a cigarette out between his lips.

WEBB
NAH, WHAT'S THE HURRY, JOHN? WE'VE GOT A FEW HOURS YET BEFORE HIGH TIDE, NO-ONE'S GONNA HEAR US DOWN HERE.
(link)
RECKON I'LL JUST SIT THIS ONE OUT, IF IT'S ALL THE SAME TO YOU.

2) Full-width panel. Two-shot, looking out past John in foreground panel left. Webb faces him from background panel right, his face suddenly lit up as he lights the cigarette. John peers down disapprovingly at the water that laps around his waist, trying unsuccessfully to see his cuffed wrists. We can see that his arms are wrapped around the wooden stanchion behind him, although the cuffs that bind his wrists are hidden below the surface.

JOHN
ALL SEEMS A BIT ELABORATE, THOUGH, ENNIT? A BIT *JAMES BOND* LIKE...
(link)
NOT EXACTLY THE MOST *PRACTICAL* METHOD OF DOING SOMEONE IN.

WEBB
PEARLY'S ORDERS. HE'S A WOSSNAME, IN'T HE... ?
(link)
TRADITIONALIST.

3) Webb leans forward, resting his elbows on his knees. He looks up and to one side as he blows smoke, thoughtful, regarding the old pubs and warehouses that line the riverside...

WEBB
THEY USED TO DROWN SMUGGLERS DOWN HERE IN THE OLD DAYS. THEY'D SET UP PIE CARTS, GET THE BEERS IN...
(link)
YOU'D BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY, MAKE A DAY OF IT.

4) Close on John, deadpan. Eye contact.

JOHN
SOUNDS LOVELY.
(link)
FESTIVE, LIKE.

5) Webb leans back in his deck chair, gesturing casually with the hand that just happens to have a gun in it...

WEBB
BESIDES, IT DON’T LEAVE ANY EVIDENCE, DOES IT? THE RIVER WASHES IT ALL AWAY.
(link)
THOSE ARE BONDAGE CUFFS. PADDED. NO LIGATURE MARKS, SEE? NOTHIN’ TO INVESTIGATE...
(link)
YOU’LL BE JUST ANOTHER USELESS WANKER FELL IN THE RIVER AND DROWNED.

PAGE 5

1) Medium close on John.

JOHN
YOU'VE DONE THIS BEFORE, HAVEN'T YOU?
(link)
'COURSE, YOU COULD JUST AS EASILY CLOUT ME OVER THE HEAD WITH A LUMP OF TWO-BY-FOUR AND CHUCK ME OFF THE EMBANKMENT...

2) Same angle, zoom into extreme close on John's eyes - sly and accusing, his gaze boring into us. Grimly amused at the sickness of it...

JOHN
... BUT YOU LIKE TO *WATCH*, DON'T YOU?

3) Webb narrows his eyes, silent and sour. He looks dangerous. John's getting under his skin, and he doesn't like it.

4) Long shot, looking out at John from behind Webb.

JOHN
SUIT YOURSELF. JUST TRYING TO MAKE CONVERSATION...
(link)
SO IF WE'RE GONNA SIT HERE IN SILENCE ALL NIGHT, COULD YOU AT LEAST SPARE THE CONDEMNED MAN A LAST CIGARETTE?

5) View from behind Webb as he walks towards John. The gun hangs at his side in the foreground, dominating the image.

6) View from behind Webb, now standing right in front of John in the extreme foreground, the gun still front-and-center. John looks up at him, wary. John Constantine has looked the Devil in the eye, but he's still afraid of guns...

PAGE 6

1) Extreme close. Webb puts a Silk Cut cigarette to John's lips.

JOHN
MAGIC.

2) Extreme close. Webb tucks the cigarette packet into the inside breast pocket of John's trenchcoat.

WEBB
KEEP THE PACK. I'VE GOT ME OWN.

3) Webb walks away from John, back up the muddy shore. Behind him, John calls out as best he can with the cigarette still held between his lips --

JOHN
HOW 'BOUT A LIGHT THEN... ?
(link)
OI - !

4) Webb settles back into his deck chair with a smug, shit-eating grin on his face, the gun in his lap. He's top dog again.

5) Extreme close on John scowling at us, the unlit cigarette drooping down from his lips. Cold, wet and pissed off. Eye contact.

JOHN
(small text)
TOSSER.

PAGE 7

Leo, if it doesn't look too much like we're trying to "show off" here, maybe you could design this page so that each panel is smaller than the previous one. So we'd start with a big establishing shot of the prison, and then each successive panel gets smaller as we "zoom in" onto the photo in panel 5. The idea is to create a growing sense of claustrophobia and imprisonment...

1) BIG establishing shot of WORMWOOD SCRUBS, the infamous London prison (I can send you some visual reference). It looms over us, menacing and monolithic, rows of tiny arched windows stretching away into the distance. It's NIGHT.

<u>Note to letterer</u>: "Location Captions" should be in a bold display font floating on the panel image, to distinguish them from John's "internal monologue" captions.

LOCATION CAPTION
WORMWOOD SCRUBS PRISON
SIX DAYS AGO

2) Interior establishing shot of the main prison cell-block (references). Rows of cell doors stretch away on either side. A walkway around the central gallery one floor up; a staircase in the middle of the hall. Quiet and deserted in the dead of night, dimly lit.

3) Establishing shot of one of the cell doors - white-painted metal with a tiny peep-hole. A small nameplate on the door reads "GREY, J.".

4) Inside the cramped prison cell, an OLD MAN sits on the single bed, staring sadly at a photo he holds tenderly in his hands. He is JOHN "PEARLY" GREY - once the most powerful gangster in London's East End, now fallen low, a broken old man. A single tear runs down Pearly's cheek...

5) Extreme close on the photo as Pearly's TEARDROP spatters onto it. The picture is of a beautiful woman in her early 30s - dark hair, intelligent eyes, dazzling smile. This is Pearly's daughter KAREN, and we'll be seeing more of her shortly...

THUG # 1
(off-panel right)
'ELLO, PEARLY.

PAGE 8

1) View from outside the cell door as TWO SILHOUETTED FIGURES push it open. Pearly looks up, surprised --

PEARLY
OI! WHO THE *FUCK* D'YOU THINK YOU ARE, STROLLIN' IN 'ERE LIKE YOU OWN THE FUCKIN' PLACE... ?

2) Pearly stands, backing up slightly. He's afraid, but trying to hide it; trying to look and sound commanding --

PEARLY
YOU-- YOU KNOW WHO I AM?

3) Pearly's POV. TWO THUGS stand in the open cell doorway - skinhead prison inmates. THUG # 1 has the letters "A.C.A.B." tattooed on his forehead ("All Cops Are Bastards").

THUG # 2
'COURSE WE DO, PEARLY. 'COURSE WE DO.

THUG # 1
YOU'RE DOIN' ALRIGHT FOR YOURSELF, AINT'CHA? THEY'VE GOT THE REST OF US DOUBLED, TRIPLED UP...
(link)
... AN' 'ERE YOU ARE WITH A KUSHTI LITTLE CELL ALL TO YOURSELF.

PAGE 9

1) The thugs step into the cell, admiring the pictures pinned to the walls.

THUG # 2
YOU MUST HAVE SOME PULL WITH THE SCREWS. 'COURSE...

2) Pearly's POV. Thug # 1 holds up a CELL DOOR KEY between thumb and forefinger. Thug # 2 hovers behind him. Both of them are smiling nastily at us, their eyes glittering darkly in the shadows...

THUG # 1
... SO DO WE.

3) Pearly tries to stand his ground, but his fear and uncertainty are growing...

PEARLY
GET-- GET OUT OF MY CELL BEFORE I 'AVE THE BOTH OF YOU GUTTED!
(link)
I STILL RUN THIS FUCKIN' MANOR - !

4) High angle, looking straight down at the grubby cell floor. Thug # 1 crouches to look at the photo of Karen, which now lies face-up on the floor...

THUG # 1
NOT ANY MORE.
(link)
SHE WAS A BIT OF ALRIGHT, YOUR KAREN, WASN'T SHE? FUCKIN' SHAME WHAT HAPPENED TO HER.
(link)
'COURSE, YOU LEAVE A BIRD IN CHARGE, YOU'RE ASKIN' FOR TROUBLE.

5) Pearly screams at them, enraged, spittle flying --

PEARLY
DON'T YOU SAY HER NAME! DON'T YOU FUCKIN' DARE!

6) The two thugs shove Pearly back against the back wall of the cell, pinning him there --

THUG # 1
DON'T YOU WORRY, PEARLY --

7) Pearly's POV. Both thugs wield home-made KNIVES, raised to stab us in the neck. Their eyes are mean and serious --

THUG # 1
... YOU'LL SOON BE JOINING HER.

PAGE 10

1) Very close. Pearly's eyes go wide with terror - and amazement. Leave enough "dead space" to include a speech balloon from off-panel...

Note to letterer: always use a ragged balloon and text for Karen's Ghost, to suggest a hoarse whisper.

KAREN'S GHOST
(from off-panel)
D-DADDY... ?

2) Close. A DEAD HAND reaches in from off-panel! The hand of a dead woman - Karen. The skin is pale and clammy, dripping wet with grubby river-water. Mud beneath her broken fingernails. She seems completely real - a solid, physical being rather than a translucent, incorporeal phantom. But all we see of her is her hand/forearm reaching in from off-panel - we want to save the big reveal for later...

KAREN'S GHOST
(from off-panel)
I'M COLD.

3) Ghost's POV. The two thugs have turned to face us, both PARALYZED with goggle-eyed, open-mouthed terror. Between them, Pearly stands frozen like a rabbit in the headlights --

4) POV from out in the cell-block. The two thugs RUN SCREAMING from the cell as if the Devil himself was chasing them. But there's nobody else there. No ghost...

PAGE 11

1) Small inset, top left corner of the page. Pearly falls to his knees, face buried in his hands, sobbing. The ghost has vanished.

2) BIG image - almost a full-page splash. View of Pearly's cell, as seen from the open doorway. Pearly kneels at the back of the room, curled up into a foetal ball, sobbing. The photo lies in the middle of the floor, lying face-up in a <u>puddle of water that wasn't there before</u>. But apart from that, the room is empty...

3) Small inset, bottom right corner of the page. Extreme close on the photo in the puddle. Water droplets lie on the surface of the photo, weirdly distorting Karen's smiling face...

PAGE 12

1) Big establishing shot - back at the riverside, night. The water-level has risen to John's mid-chest. His unlit cigarette is gone - presumably he spat it into the river.

CAPTION
... FUCK ME, THIS WATER'S COLD!

CAPTION
THIS IS TAKING TOO LONG. HE'S NOT TAKING THE BAIT.

JOHN
PEARLY'S ORDERS, HE SAYS. HIS MASTER'S VOICE.
(link)
IS THAT YOU THEN, WEBB - THE OBEDIENT LITTLE LAPDOG? IF PEARLY TOLD YOU TO TAKE A JUMP OFF TOWER BRIDGE, WOULD YOU DO IT?

2) Webb doesn't take the bait.

WEBB
I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TRYIN' TO DO. THEY ALL TRIED IT, EVERY ONE OF 'EM.

3) Webb rises from his deck-chair, blows smoke, untroubled...

WEBB
YOU RECKON YOU CAN TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS BY APPEALIN' TO MY BETTER NATURE.
(link)
WELL, TOUGH LUCK, GOBSHITE...

4) Standing at the water's edge, Webb deftly FLICKS his cigarette stub at John. It bounces off John's eyebrow, scattering hot ash. John winces in pain --

WEBB
I HAVEN'T GOT ONE.

JOHN
AAOW-!

PAGE 13

1) BIG. Close on John, snarling, a tiny wisp of smoke drifting from his scorched eyebrow --

JOHN
FOR FUCK'S SAKE! HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU, I DIDN'T KILL KAREN GREY!

2) Webb crouches in front of John, weighing him up.

WEBB
'COURSE YOU BLOODY DIDN'T. ANY CUNT CAN SEE THAT...

CAPTION
(at foot of panel)
HERE IT COMES.

3) Close on John. Eye contact.

CAPTION
HE'S READY...

4) Same angle, closer. John's eye drilling into us.

CAPTION
ALL HE NEEDS IS A NUDGE.

PAGE 14

1) Establishing shot of the arched entrance gate of Wormwood Scrubs prison (refs). It’s now DAY.

LOCATION CAPTION
WORMWOOD SCRUBS PRISON
FOUR DAYS AGO

2) High, wide, establishing shot of the interior of the prison meeting room. Rows of tables and chairs, where inmates can meet with friends, family and solicitors. Pearly Grey sits opposite WEBB, the two of them leaning forward to speak confidentially. Webb pushes a pack of cigarettes over to Pearly. Prison guards stand at the back wall, watching over it all.

WEBB
YOU ALRIGHT, PEARLY? I HEARD YOU HAD A CLOSE CALL THE OTHER NIGHT--

PEARLY
I SAW KAREN.

3) Close on Webb - genuinely surprised, but trying not to make a big deal of it.

WEBB
... YOU WHAT?

4) Close on Pearly, leaning forward, intense. Eye contact.

PEARLY
I SAW HER, WEBB. CLEAR AS FUCKIN’ DAY. SHE WAS *RIGHT HERE*. IT WAS...
(link)
IT WAS HORRIBLE.

PAGE 15

1) Two-shot. Webb tries to look conciliatory - humoring Pearly, who just sits there, simmering. Pearly doesn't like to be patronized, especially by subordinates.

WEBB
LISTEN, CHIEF, IT WAS A RIGHT BLOODY TRAGEDY WHAT HAPPENED. CHRIST, YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME...
(link)
BUT NO OFFENSE AN' ALL THAT, BUT... YOU'VE GOTTA TRY AN' KEEP IT TOGETHER.

2) Close on Webb, intense. Eye contact.

WEBB
SOMEONE'S OBVIOUSLY TRYIN' TO TAKE ADVANTAGE, MAKIN' A MOVE ON OUR MANOR.
(link)
YOU START TALKIN' LIKE YOU'VE LOST YOUR MARBLES, IT'S GONNA MAKE US LOOK WOBBLY RIGHT WHEN WE SHOULD BE GOIN' ON THE OFFENSIVE --

3) Pearly suddenly explodes with rage --

PEARLY
YOU SAYIN' I DON'T KNOW MY OWN FUCKIN' DAUGHTER?!

4) Webb leans back, holding up both hands in a placatory gesture...

WEBB
ALRIGHT PEARLY, ALRIGHT. I BELIEVE YOU. YOU SAW HER.
(link)
SO DID SHE, LIKE... SAY ANYTHIN'...?

5) Close on Pearly, bitter and heartbroken, but refusing to let himself look weak. He takes a cigarette from the pack...

PEARLY
SHE SAID ENOUGH.
(link)
SHE SAID SHE WAS *MURDERED*.

PAGE 16

1) Webb's eyebrows go up. He tries to look sympathetic but unconcerned - not an easy combination to pull off convincingly...

WEBB
DID SHE NOW.

2) Full-width panel. View from behind Webb's shoulder, looking towards Pearly. Pearly just sits there, taking a long, slow drag on his cigarette, silently regarding Webb. Weighing him up.

WEBB
SO DID SHE, *UH*...
(link)
DID SHE SAY WHO DID IT?

3) Finally Pearly leans forward to say --

PEARLY
FUNNY YOU SHOULD ASK.
(link)
TELL ME...

4) Big image, with real weight. Same angle - move in closer on Pearly, very intense. His eyes are cold and hard and dangerous - the eyes of a man who means to do murder...

PEARLY
YOU EVER HEARD OF A CHANCER BY THE NAME OF *CONSTANTINE... ?*

PAGE 17

1) Big, full-width establishing shot. We're back in the present day, at the river. Night. The water has risen to John's shoulders. Webb stands before him, twiddling one finger to his temple - the gesture meaning "crazy"...

WEBB
IT WAS BEAUTIFUL. I COULDN'T HAVE SET IT UP BETTER IF I TRIED.
(link)
MAYBE PEARLY GREY USED TO BE THE KING OF THE EAST END, BUT THE GRIEF OF LOSIN' HIS LITTLE GIRL'S OBVIOUSLY SNAPPED HIS BRAIN. HE'S SEEIN' THINGS.
(link)
SUPERNATURAL THINGS.

2) Move in closer on Webb, pleased with himself...

WEBB
AN' I DUNNO, YOU THINK SUPERNATURAL, YOU THINK *JOHN CONSTANTINE*. HE RECKONS *YOU'RE* THE ONE DONE HER IN.
(link)
SO HE GIVES ME THE NOD - PICK YOU UP AND PUT YOU IN THE RIVER. I COULDN'T FUCKIN' BELIEVE IT...

3) Close on Webb, with an evil, smug grin.

WEBB
SAVES ME THE BOTHER OF FINDIN' SOME OTHER MUG, DUNNIT?

4) Close on John, scowling, accusing, intense. Eye contact.

JOHN
YOU KILLED HER.

PAGE 18

1) Webb stands, gesturing expansively, arms wide, like “What are ya gonna do?”

WEBB
WHO DIED AND MADE YOU FUCKIN’ COLUMBO?
(link)
PEARLY LEAVES HER IN CHARGE WHEN HE GOES INSIDE, AND WHAT DOES SHE DO? TRIES TO TAKE US LEGIT! EVERYTHIN’ WE EVER FOUGHT FOR, SHE PISSES IT ALL AWAY!
(link)
TOO RIGHT I FUCKIN’ KILLED HER!

2) Webb wanders down towards the water line...

WEBB
I’M NOT ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT. I’VE DONE PLENTY LIKE THIS. PLENTY.
(link)
YOU’RE NO DIFFERENT. THEY’RE ALL MOUTHY LITTLE CUNTS AT FIRST. IT’S ALL “FUCK YOU” AND “WHEN I GET OUT OF HERE”...

3) Webb crouches at the water’s edge, staring into John’s eyes...

WEBB
‘TIL THE TIDE COMES UP, AND THEIR NOSE FILLS WITH DIRTY WATER, AND THAT COCKY LITTLE LOOK IN THEIR EYES TURNS TO SOMETHIN’ MORE LIKE... *DESPERATION*.
(link)
AND THEY DON’T DARE *CLOSE* ‘EM, SEE – ‘CAUSE THAT’S ALL THEY’VE GOT LEFT. JUST THAT LOOK IN THEIR EYES THAT SAYS, *PLEASE...*
(link)
PLEASE DON’T LET ME DROWN.

4) Still crouching, Webb gestures to his own eyes with two fingers...

WEBB
AND I SIT HERE. AND I LOOK ‘EM IN THE EYE. AND I WAIT...
(link)

ALL THEY WAY DOWN, ‘TIL THE LIGHTS
GO OUT AND THE WRIGGLIN’ STOPS AND
THE WATER GOES ALL FLAT AND CALM
AGAIN.

5) Extreme close on Webb, smiling serenely, calm and at peace...

WEBB
THAT LOOK IN THEIR EYES...
(link)
I FUCKIN’ LOVE THAT.

PAGE 19

1) Just John, sly, almost sinister...

JOHN
I WAS RIGHT. YOU *DO* LIKE TO WATCH.
(link)
BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'VE GOT THE BALLS TO TAKE IT ALL THE WAY. I THINK YOU JUST GET OFF ON SCARING THE SHIT OUT OF POOR HELPLESS SODS LIKE ME - AND THEN YOU'LL PROBABLY GO HOME AND HAVE A MASSIVE WANK OVER IT AFTERWARDS.
(link)
THAT SOUND ABOUT RIGHT, WEBB? YOU JUST A SAD LITTLE NONCE?

2) Webb stands, genuinely shocked by the suicidal insult --

3) Furious, Webb wades into the water and presses the muzzle of the gun to John's forehead --

WEBB
SAY THAT AGAIN.

4) Two-shot, close. John's head is pushed sideways by the pressure of the gun against his temple --

JOHN
ALRIGHT, MATE, TAKE IT EASY --
(link)
WHAT ABOUT PEARLY'S ORDERS - S'POSED TO LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT, ENNIT-- ?

5) Webb snarls --

WEBB
FUCK PEARLY.
(link)
YOU SAY WHAT YOU JUST SAID AGAIN.

6) Very close on John, the gun still there...

JOHN
WHO WERE THEY, THEN? ALL THESE PEOPLE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE DONE IN THE RIVER... ?
(link)

YOU WANT ME TO BELIEVE YOU, GIMME SOME NAMES.

PAGE 20

1) FULL PAGE SPLASH. John's POV. Webb looms over us, glaring at us menacingly. The gun in his hand in the extreme foreground, massively foreshortened by depth perspective...

WEBB
SOME BANKER. HODGE SOMETHING.
GEOFFREY HODGKINSON.
(link)
JOE CARDIGAN.
(link)
RICHIE MCTIGHE.
(link)
DALE GROVER.
(link)
TOMMY DAYE.
(link)
JIMMY THE DOGS.
(link)
KAREN GREY...
(link)
... AND *JOHN. FUCKIN'. CONSTANTINE!*

JOHN
YOU KNOW WHAT, WEBB? I BELIEVE YOU.
(link)
SO WHAT ABOUT THOSE SKINHEADS IN THE SCRUBS - THE ONES YOU PAID TO KNIFE OLD PEARLY? YOU GONNA DISPOSE OF THEM IN THE RIVER AN' ALL... ?

PAGE 21

NOTE: This is the new page to be re-drawn.

1) Webb LOWERS THE GUN, suddenly taken aback and lost for words.

WEBB
WHAT... ?
(link)
HOW-- HOW D'YOU KNOW ABOUT... ?

2) Close on John. Eye contact.

JOHN
SHE WAS *THERE*, WEBB.
(link)
THE RIVER DOESN'T WASH EVERYTHING AWAY. NOT WHEN THERE'S UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

3) John now seems strangely confident, even threatening, despite his vulnerable position in the water. The revelation has shifted the balance of power. Leo, please leave room for the dialogue!

JOHN
THING IS, THOUGH - PEARLY AND ME, WE GO WAY BACK. SO WHEN HE GETS A VISIT FROM HIS DAUGHTER SIX WEEKS AFTER SHE WAS DREDGED OUT OF THE RIVER IN A PLASTIC BAG...
(link)
WELL, HE GIVES ME A CALL, DOESN'T HE?

4) Two-shot. John remains cool, steely calm, his eyes drilling into Webb. Webb snarls, angry again, and AIMS THE GUN at John.

JOHN
YOU CAN'T KILL ME NOW. YOU *NEED* ME.
(link)
IN FACT, I'D UNLOCK THESE CUFFS RIGHT NOW IF I WERE YOU.

5) Close on John. Eye contact. The ghost of a self-satisfied smile plays at the edge of his lips - he knows he's successfully bluffed and won a long-shot.

JOHN
IT'S THE *NAMES*, SEE? YOU'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL WITH NAMES.

THEY CAN BE DANGEROUS.
(link)
TELL ME...

6) SMALL silent inset. Extreme close on Webb’s eyeball, suddenly going WIDE with terror --

PAGE 22

FULL-PAGE SPLASH! Webb's POV as SEVEN ZOMBIES RISE FROM THE RIVER! They are actually ghosts, but they look completely physical - rotting flesh rather than translucent phantoms. Closest to us is KAREN GREY, Pearly's daughter, from the photo we saw earlier. She is naked, her skin pale and scabbed, streaked with blue-grey veins, mottled with algae. The flesh of her torso has been savagely ripped open by a tug-boat's propeller-blade. Her black hair clings to her wetly. Her eyeballs are black and bloated. She reaches one hand towards us, the nails black with rot, dripping wet...

Behind her, other figures rise from the deeper waters, each of them more decayed and bloated than the last - the other victims Webb has drowned over the years. It's an image straight out of a nightmare...

And beside them, completely unperturbed by these horrors, as if expecting them (which he was!), John Constantine still sits facing us, the water-level now risen to his shoulders. He nails us with a steely gaze and says --

JOHN
... D'YOU KNOW WHAT AN *INVOCATION* IS?

END CAPTION
TO BE CONCLUDED